

located to select one of the stored advertisements, and to dynamically insert the selected advertisement into the game code; and

an advertising server connected to the communication network and coupled to a data repository, the advertising server structured to send the set of advertisements and their identifying criteria to the game console while the game code is executing on the game console.

3. A computer-based method for dynamically incorporating advertisements into already executing gaming code on a game client system while a game player is playing a game, comprising:

detecting an advertising tag having an associated set of criteria;

dynamically receiving over a network a plurality of advertisements while the game player is playing the game;

determining from the received plurality of advertisements a conforming advertisement that matches the set of criteria associated with the detected advertising tag; and

displaying content associated with the conforming advertisement in a location indicated by the detected advertising tag.

4. The method of claim 3 wherein the set of criteria comprises at least one of an advertisement type, an advertisement genre, and scheduling information.

5. The method of claim 3 wherein the dynamically receiving imperceptibly impacts performance of the game.

6. The method of claim 5 further comprising using a dribble pipe to dynamically receive the plurality of advertisements.

7. The method of claim 3 further comprising: forwarding information regarding the displaying of content associated with the conforming advertisement.

8. The method of claim 3, further comprising, upon detecting that the game player has interacted with the displayed content associated with the conforming advertisement, modifying the game behavior of a game object.

9. A game console comprising:

output device;

network connection; and

computer processor that is executing a computer game program structured to display portions of the executing game environment on the output device; locate an advertising tag in the executing game program having an associated set of criteria, receive and store a plurality of advertisements over the network connection while a game player is playing the executing game, determine from the stored plurality of advertisements an advertisement that conforms to the set of criteria associated with the located advertising tag, and display the conforming advertisement as part of the game environment displayed on the output device.

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10. A computer-readable memory medium containing instructions for controlling a processor of a game client system to dynamically incorporate advertisements into already executing game code while a game player is playing a game, by:

detecting an advertising tag having an associated set of criteria;

dynamically receiving over a network a plurality of advertisements while the game player is playing the game;

determining from the received plurality of advertisements a conforming advertisement that matches the set of criteria associated with the detected advertising tag; and

displaying content associated with the conforming advertisement in a location indicated by the detected advertising tag.

11. A method in a computer-system for providing advertisements to a game console for dynamic incorporation into a game running on the game console, comprising:

establishing a connection with the game console that is running the game;

receiving a request over the connection for an advertisement that meets an indicated set of criteria comprising at least one of a type, a genre, and schedule requirements;

determining from a data repository an advertisement that potentially meets the indicated set of criteria; and

retrieving and forwarding the determined advertisement to the game console while the game is in play.

12. The method of claim 11 wherein the forwarding the determined advertisement to the game console while the game is in play is done in a manner that minimizes performance degradation to the game.

13. The method of claim 12 wherein the minimized performance degradation is accomplished through use of a dribble pipe.

14. An advertising server for providing advertisements to a game console for dynamic incorporation into a game running on the game console, comprising:

a network connection;

a data repository of advertising content; and

a computer processor executing a server program structure to:

establish a connection with the game console that is running the game;

receive a request over the connection for an advertisement that meets an indicated set of criteria comprising at least one of a type, a genre, and schedule requirements;

determine from a data repository an advertisement that potentially meets the indicated set of criteria;

retrieve the determined advertisement from the data repository; and

forward the retrieved advertisement to the game console while the game is in play.

15. A computer-readable memory medium that contains instructions for controlling a computer processor in an advertising server to provide advertisements to a game console for dynamic incorporation into a game, by:

establishing a connection with the game console that is running the game;

receiving a request over the connection for an advertisement that meets an indicated set of criteria comprising at least one of a type, a genre, and schedule requirements;

determining from a data repository an advertisement that potentially meets the indicated set of criteria; and

retrieving and forwarding the determined advertisement to the game console while the game is in play.

16. A method in a computer-based game environment for displaying virtual world unified advertisements, the game environment having a plurality of game client systems that are concurrently executing a game program provided by a game server system, comprising:

receiving by a first game client system an indication of an advertisement content to be displayed in a designated virtual world location of the executing game program;

receiving by a second game client system an indication of the advertisement content to be displayed in the designated virtual world location of the executing game program; and

the first game client system, upon receiving an indication that the second game client system has received the indication of the advertisement content, displaying the indicated advertisement content in the designated virtual world location of the executing game program on a display of the first game client system, thereby allowing the game program on the first and second game client systems to display the same advertisement content in the designated virtual world location at approximately the same time.

17. A method in a computer game environment for determining a measure of advertising effectiveness for a plurality of advertisements provided by an advertising provider, comprising:

dynamically displaying an advertisement content from the plurality of advertisements in a portion of the game currently being executed on a display screen of the game environment;

automatically generating an effectiveness measure associated with the advertisement content by determining a measure of quality of exposure and duration of exposure to the advertisement content by a game object that is associated with a game player; and

forwarding the generated effectiveness measure to the advertising provider.

18. The method of claim 17 wherein the measure of quality of exposure determines an indicator of likelihood that the game object that is associated with the game player observed the displayed advertisement content.

19. The method of claim 18 wherein the determination is made using a view frustum technique.

20. The method of claim 17 wherein the forwarding of the generated effectiveness measure to the advertising provider is performed in a non-intrusive manner by forwarding the effectiveness measure in a communication packet that is used for purposes other than for forwarding the measure of advertising effectiveness.

21. The method of claim 20 wherein the purpose of the communication packet is for acknowledgment of received advertisement content.
